

LAKE ERIE



LAKEWIDE
MANAGEMENT
PLAN



Lake Erie LaMP 2000



Preface

One of the most significant environmental agreements in the history of the Great Lakes took place with the signing of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement of 1978 (GLWQA), between the United States and Canada. This historic agreement committed the U.S. and Canada (the Parties) to address the water quality issues of the Great Lakes in a coordinated, joint fashion. The purpose of the GLWQA is to “restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the waters of the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem.”

In the revised GLWQA of 1978, as amended by Protocol signed November 18, 1987, the Parties agreed to develop and implement, in consultation with State and Provincial Governments, Lakewide Management Plans (LaMPs) for lake waters and Remedial Action Plans (RAPs) for Areas of Concern (AOCs). The LaMPs are intended to identify critical pollutants that impair beneficial uses and to develop strategies, recommendations and policy options to restore these beneficial uses. Moreover, the Specific Objectives Supplement to Annex 1 of the GLWQA requires the development of ecosystem objectives for the lakes as the state of knowledge permits. Annex 2 further indicates that the RAPs and LaMPs “shall embody a systematic and comprehensive ecosystem approach to restoring and protecting beneficial uses...they are to serve as an important step toward virtual elimination of persistent toxic substances...”

The Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement specifies that the LaMPs are to be completed in four stages. These stages are: 1) when problem definition has been completed; 2) when the schedule of load reductions has been determined; 3) when remedial measures are selected; and 4) when monitoring indicates that the contribution of the critical pollutants to impairment of beneficial uses has been eliminated. These stage descriptions suggest that the LaMPs are to focus solely on the impact of critical pollutants to the lakes. However, the group of government agencies designing the LaMPs felt it was also an opportunity to address other equally important issues in the lake basins. Therefore, the LaMPs go beyond the requirement of a LaMP for critical pollutants, and use an ecosystem approach, integrating environmental protection and natural resource management.

The LaMP process has proven to be a resource intensive effort and has taken much longer than expected. As a result, the public has had to wait years for a document to review. In the interest of advancing the rehabilitation of the Great Lakes, and getting more information out to the public in a timely manner, the Binational Executive Committee (BEC) passed a resolution in 1999 to accelerate the LaMP effort (BEC, 1999). By accelerate, it was meant that there should be an emphasis on taking action and adopting a streamlined LaMP review and approval process. The LaMPs should treat problem identification, selection of remedial and regulatory measures, and implementation as a concurrent, integrated process rather than a sequential one.

The BEC recommended that a LaMP be produced for each lake by April 2000, with updates every two years thereafter. Furthermore, BEC suggested that the LaMPs be based on the current body of knowledge and state what remedial actions can be implemented now. Consistent with the BEC resolution, LaMP 2000 contains appropriate funded and proposed (non-funded) actions for restoration and protection to bring about actual improvement in the ecosystem. Actions include commitments by the Parties, governments and regulatory programs, as well as suggested voluntary actions that could be taken by non-governmental partners. LaMP 2002 will report on the success of those actions, as well as identify additional actions needed to achieve established goals and ecosystem objectives.

The BEC also endorsed application of the concept of adaptive management to the LaMP process. The LaMPs employ a dynamic process with iterative elements, such as periodic reporting. Adaptive management allows the process to change and build upon lessons learned, successes, new information, and public input. The LaMP will adjust over

time to address the most pertinent issues facing the lake ecosystems.

Some sections of the LaMP 2000 document and the background reports used to produce them have undergone extensive review by the LaMP agencies and the public. Others have not. Some sections are incomplete and identify data gaps and next steps for LaMP 2002. The LaMP 2000 should be viewed as a working document of the dynamic LaMP process. The LaMP 2000 is presented in a loose-leaf format with general tabbed sections that can be inserted into a three-ring binder. This format will allow easy updates, additions of new material and removal of outdated information. The LaMPs for Lake Erie, Lake Michigan and Lake Superior have common chapters, but differ in format and amount of detail. With the help of the many partners and the public, we will be able to take the best qualities from each and design LaMPs for 2002 that are more concise and user-friendly.



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Canada

- Agriculture and Agri-food Canada
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada
- FOCALErie (Federation of Conservation Authorities of Lake Erie)
- Health Canada
- Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
- Ontario Ministry of the Environment
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources

United States

- Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
- Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
- Michigan Department of Natural Resources
- Natural Resource Conservation Service
- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
- Ohio Department of Natural Resources
- Ohio Environmental Protection Agency
- Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- US Geological Survey

Binational

- Great Lakes Fishery Commission

Many members of the Work Group, Management Committee, technical subcommittees and the Binational Public Forum provided comments and suggestions to improve the document. Dr. Linda Corkum, University of Windsor, prepared Section 11.2 on non-indigenous invasive species. Lauren Lambert, Ora Johannsson and Janet Planck took on the enormous task of synthesizing the beneficial use impairment assessments into Section 4. Karen Rodriguez drafted the Habitat Action Plan (Section 9.3 and Appendix D). Laura Evans worked with Alan Waffle to develop the PCB and Mercury Action Plans in Sections 9.4 and 9.5, respectively, and the related appendices. The Upper Thames River Conservation Authority provided production support on formatting and printing the document, showing utmost patience in dealing with many last minute changes. Julie Letterhos served as the overall editor for the LaMP 2000 document. In keeping with the spirit of binational cooperation, the reader will note the alternation between Canadian and U.S. preferred spelling on a number of occasions.

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